

# Guidelines on Liturgical Dress

1. The Commission on Liturgy recognizes the freedom of ministers of the Word, deacons and other leaders of worship to choose whether or not to wear liturgical dress.
2. In the interests of a commonality of practice in the Uniting Church, the Commission recommends the following guidelines for the wearing of liturgical dress when leading worship and in other appropriate circumstances:
  - 2.1 Ministers of the Word, deacons, and other leaders of worship wear the alb. It may be worn with or without girdle or cincture.
  - 2.2 Ministers of the Word and deacons may wear a stole in the colours of the liturgical season. Ministers of the Word wear the stole around the shoulders and hanging down both sides at the front; deacons wear it over the left shoulder and tied or fastened at the right hip.
  - 2.3 Alternatively, ministers of the Word and deacons may wear a scarf, both wearing it in the same manner, i.e. around the shoulders and hanging down both sides at the front. The Uniting Church scarf is blue.
  - 2.4 Leaders of worship may also choose to wear a simple pectoral cross, or other Christian symbol.
  - 2.5 Thus, it is appropriate for lay leaders of worship, including lay pastors, lay preachers, and candidates for the ministry, if they wish, to wear alb (and pectoral cross or other Christian symbol), and scarf but not stole. A lay President, Moderator or Chairperson of Presbytery may also wear a scarf of office.
- 3.1 It is preferable that the alb, as its name implies, be white. The girdle should also be white.
- 3.2 The stole is a strip of material, either plain or textured (e.g. brocade) in colours appropriate to the seasons of the liturgical year. The width of the stole may vary according to its designer's preference, but it is usually cut to fit around the neck (i.e. without pleats), and is usually narrower than a scarf. It may hang to about knee length, and may be decorated with appropriate universal Christian symbol either at the bottom or at chest height. The stole is a sign of ordination, either of a minister of the Word or a deacon.
- 3.3 The scarf is a strip of plain material, some 18-20 cms in width, gathered into pleats at the neck, and hanging down to about knee length, and without fringes. It may be decorated with a Uniting Church logo, and/or a cross, or the emblem of some other Uniting Church organization at the bottom of both sides. A Moderator may wear a panel of silver cloth and a President a panel of gold cloth at the base of the scarf. The Uniting Church scarf is blue, but some presbyteries have designated alternative colours for the scarves worn by their office-bearers. The scarf is a sign of office in the church, worn by both lay and ordained people.
4. The Commission also honours the traditions received from the uniting churches, which included the wearing of dress distinctive of the particular churches and ecclesiastical office. Therefore, it recognizes the right of ministers to continue to wear such dress, which may include cassock, bands, gown, hood and black scarf.
5. It is not appropriate to wear academic robes or hoods with alb and stole or scarf. When it is appropriate to wear such distinctions, they are worn with their proper dress (e.g. street dress, cassock and bands etc.).

*11 November 1992*